

Growing in Faith, One Mass at a Time



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Faith in God is the greatest gift a parent can give his or her child. At your child's Baptism, you accepted the responsibility of training him or her in the practice of the faith. When we participate in Mass, we manifest that faith and strengthen our ability to witness to it in the world. Yet, helping our children to understand what happens at Mass and to participate in it fully is a continual challenge, especially as they grow and develop over the years.

In 1963, the Second Vatican Council (often called Vatican II) produced its first document, the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, which called for a restoration and promotion of the liturgy. While this document of course does not specifically address how to get your kid to pay attention and stop kicking the pew in front of you at Mass, it does provide insight on the importance of our participation at Mass. This document has greatly shaped our understanding and experience of liturgy today, and exploring its main themes will provide insight that can help you and your children enter into the Mass.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What was your experience of attending Mass as a child? How did this affect the development of your faith?

- How would you characterize your child's experience of the Mass? Is it helping him or her to grow in faith? Why or why not?

ACTIVITY

Articulating goals and outlining steps to move toward them is a common practice used to make positive changes in our lives. This same discipline can be applied to our spiritual lives. Take some time to reflect on the impact you hope faith in God will have on your child, both now and as an adult. Then ponder what needs to happen for you to move toward these goals. How do you need to grow individually and together as a family in order to make these goals a reality? It is often helpful to periodically review your goals and your progress. Use your child's birthday, the beginning of a school year, or other important milestones in your family's life to review and recommit to the goals you have named.



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